

Emergency Watershed Protection (EWP)



Herman Garcia, NRCS State Range Conservationist, inspecting burned soil to determine organic material remaining and diversity of seed material applied.

photo: USDA-NRCS

The Program

The **Emergency Watershed Protection (EWP)** program helps protect lives and property threatened by natural disasters such as floods, hurricanes, tornadoes, and wildfires.

The Partnership

EWP provides funding to project sponsors for such work as cleaning debris from installing straw wattles, weed control, clogged waterways, contour tree felling, straw mulching, restoring vegetation, and stabilizing river banks.

The Assistance

NRCS provides up to 75 percent of the funds needed to restore the natural function of a watershed. The community or local sponsor of the work pays the remaining 25 percent, which can be provided by cash or in-kind service.

EWP Flood Plain Easement Program

This program allows NRCS to purchase easements on agricultural land that is subject to repeated flooding, or land where flooding is expected to recur, lowlands that are primarily cropland, grazing land, hayland and forestland adjacent to a river, lake, or watercourse.

Colorado's 2002 Fire Season

NRCS provided approximately **\$12.3** million in EWP cost-share funds and technical assistance for rehabilitating burned areas resulting from more than **11** wildfires.

A total of **1,795** privately owned structures were damaged and/or destroyed. Private land totaling **51,863** acres received treatment to reduce sediment and erosion that could damage soil productivity and water quality, or threaten human life or property.

Municipalities downstream from the burned areas were especially concerned about potential damage to their water supplies and sewage treatment facilities.